UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1995/322
21 April 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 18 APRIL 1995 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In my report to the Security Council of 28 March 1995 on the situation in Somalia (S/1995/231), submitted in pursuance of Security Council resolution 954 (1994), I indicated that I expected to be in a position to take a decision by mid-April 1995 about the level and mandate of a continued United Nations political presence in Mogadishu. I further indicated that the size and mandate of that presence would depend on whether the Somali parties wanted the United Nations to play a facilitating or mediating role and were ready to cooperate with it, and that its location should be in Mogadishu, the security situation there permitting.

In the presidential statement of 6 April (S/PRST/1995/15), the Security Council welcomed my intention to continue a small political mission, should the Somali parties so wish, to assist them in coming together in national reconciliation. In this connection, the members of the Council may wish to take note of the enclosed press release which was issued by the Somali National Alliance on 11 April 1995. I shall stay in touch with the parties with a view to overcoming reservations such as those expressed therein.

In order to determine whether the present situation in Mogadishu is sufficiently secure to allow for the establishment of an office in that location, I recently dispatched a security assessment mission there. That mission's report is currently under preparation and the Council will be apprised of its findings as soon as they are available.

Meanwhile, I have concluded that the retention of a full-time Special Representative at the under-secretary-general level cannot be justified at the present time in view of the limited possibilities for United Nations political efforts related to Somalia. Mr. Victor Gbeho is therefore preparing to return to his home country. Instead, I have decided to establish a small political office, headed by a representative at the D-2 level and assisted by two Professional officers and a limited number of support staff. The office will monitor the situation in Somalia and keep contact with the parties concerned to the extent possible. The office will operate temporarily from Nairobi but will be relocated to Mogadishu as soon as circumstances permit.

I should be grateful if you could bring these matters to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

Annex

Press release by the Somali National Alliance dated 11 April 1995

The death and destruction which resulted from the foreign interference in Somalia in which tens of thousands of innocent Somalis lost their lives and billions of dollars' worth of public and private property was destroyed has left in the minds of the Somali people painful memories which may take a long period of time to heal.

As a consequence, no Somali with a sense of nationalism, or who wishes for the revival of the United Nations reputation in this country, can accept that the United Nations now opens an office in Somalia.

It is quite strange that the United Nations in general and the Secretary-General in particular claim that they want to help reconciliation in Somalia when they themselves created most of the rival factions in Somalia and supplied them with arms and money to finance their war activities.

We believe that the office decided by the United Nations to be opened in Somalia is intended to perpetuate its previous activities to finance prolonged civil wars and instigate further hostilities and conflicts in Somalia.

Substantial progress has been made in Somalia as far as peace and reconciliation is concerned since the final departure of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and the Somalis have not missed them. Peace and security have returned to the capital, and the wanton killings and banditry have ended.

United Nations activities in Somalia were correctly defined in a simple statement by the representative of the European Union in Somalia, Mr. Illing, who visited Mogadishu three weeks after UNOSOM's departure:

"The best that the United Nations did for Somalia was to decide to leave that country", Mr. Illing was quoted as saying. He further stated that "Just two weeks after the departure of UNOSOM the Somalis have made more progress than in the two and a half years of the United Nations Operation in Somalia".

Because of all the above-mentioned facts as well as many others, it is even inappropriate to talk about the United Nations political return to Somalia for the time being, let alone for it to re-establish an office here.

The Somali people need neither the United Nations nor any other foreigners to mediate between them in their reconciliation process; they are capable of sorting out their political differences and achieving their own reconciliation and will not accept any further interference in their own political affairs.